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Message Text

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11
ACTION SS-15

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 IO-12 CU-04 AID-20 NSC-10 USIA-12

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 RSR-01 /097 W
---------- 034908
R 260130 Z APR 73
FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6696

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 0966

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR BM
SUBJECT: YOUTH PARA

REF: STATE 070302

1. THE YOUTH OF BURMA REMAINS TIGHTLY CONTROLLED, OCCASIONALLY MANIPULATED BY THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT AND PRACTICALLY INACCESSIBLE TO NORMAL PROGRAMMING BY MISSION PERSONNEL. YOUTH " LEADERS" ARE THOSE CHOSEN BY THE GOVERNMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN YOUTH MOVEMENT OR " VOLUNTEER" SOCIAL WORK LIKE CENSUS DATA COLLECTION -- ALWAYS UNDER THE CLOSE SUPERVISION OF GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES. ALTHOUGH, AND PERHAPS BECAUSE, THE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS WERE VERY ACTIVE DURING BURMA' S INDEPENDENCE STRUGGLE, THE NE WIN GOVERNMENT HAS PREVENTED ANY INDEPENDENT ACTIVISM BY STUDENTS OR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS TODAY. THE TONE FOR THIS REGIME' S DEALINGS WITH ACTIVISTS WAS SET IN 1962 WHEN GOVERNMENT TROOPS KILLED OVER A HUNDRED STUDENTS AND BLEW UP THE STUDENT UNION BUILDING ON RANGOON UNIVERSITY WHILE PUTTING DOWN A CAMPUS DISTURBANCE. THE BUILDING WAS NEVER REBUILT AND THE RUINS REMAIN AS A REMINDER OF THE GOVERNMENT APPROACH TO STUDENTS. POLICE ROUNDUPS REMAIN A REGULAR PART OF GUB' S DEALING WITH ANY YOUTHS WHO DEVIATE FROM APPROVED BEHAVIOR.

2. WITH VIRTUALLY ALL CAREER OPPORTUNITIES-- INCLUDING THE PROFESSIONS-- CONTROLLED BY THE GOVERNMENT, THE ONLY ROUTE FOR " SUCCESS" FOR A YOUTH IS THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY STRUCTURE AND THEN WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT AND PARTY BUREAUCRACY. BOTH THE PARTY AND BUREAUCRACY ARE DOMINATED BY OLD LINE MEMBERS-- MANY OF WHOM, HOWEVER,
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ARE ONLY IN THEIR MID- FORTIES AND NOT ABOUT TO BE REPLACED BY NEW FIGURES.

3. MANY YOUNG PEOPLE, PARTICULARLY THOSE OF ABILITY, ARE PRIMARILY

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INTERESTED IN GETTING OUT OF BURMA RATHER THAN TRYING TO EITHER " MAKE IT" WITH THE SYSTEM OR CHANGE THE SYSTEM FROM WITHIN. THOSE TRYING TO " MAKE IT" WITHIN THE SYSTEM WOULD NORMALLY AVOID CONTACT WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF ANY FOREIGN EMBASSIE S. THOSE WITH GOVERNMENT POSITIONS, IN FACT, MUST OBTAIN PERMISSION FROM SUPERIORS FOR ANYTHING BUT THE MOST CASUAL CONTACT WITH MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY. A YOUNG REPORTER COULD NOT, FOR EXAMPLE, ACCEPT AN INVITATION TO LUNCH AT A FOREIGN INFORMATION OFFICER' S HOME WITHOUT HIS EDITOR' S APPROVAL AND MORE THAN LIKELY THAT APPROVAL WOULD NOT BE GIVEN.

4. THE GUB REMAINS VERY SENSITIVE TO ANY APPROACHES BY FOREIGN MISSIONS TO STUDENTS OR YOUNG GOVERNMENT WORKERS AND THOSE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HOPE TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS WITHIN THE CURRENT SYSTEM RECOGNIZE THAT CONTACT WITH FOREIGNERS WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO THEIR CHANCES FOR SUCCESS AND PERHAPS EVEN THEIR PHYSICAL SECURITY.

I. YOUTH CATEGORIES

K- A. DIRECTION OF EFFORT:

10 PERCENT MILITARY OFFICERS

30 PERCENT BUREAUCRATS-- FOREIGN, HOME, EDUCATION, INFORMATION MINISTRIES

20 PERCENT MEDIA PROFESSIONALS

10 PERCENT DOCTORS

10 PERCENT EDUCATORS

20 PERCENT FACULTIES OF ECONOMICS, ENGINEERING AND ENGLISH AT RANGOON UNIVERSITY, RANGOON INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

I- B. RATIONALE:

ANY YOUTH- DIRECTED ACTIVITIES BY U. S. MISSION ELEMENTS ARE MORE HOLDING ACTIONS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS THAN A HOPE FOR ANY CHANGE IN ATTITUDES IN THE NEAR FUTURE OR DEVELOPMENT OF SERIOUS CONTACT WITH FUTURE LEADERS. THE MILITARY AND BUREAUCRACY ARE THE MOST LIKELY SOURCES FOR FUTURE LEADERS BUT ALSO THE MOST DIFFICULT GROUP WITHIN WHICH TO DEVELOP CONTACTS. ACTIVITY WITH MEDIA PERSONNEL REMAINS IMPORTANT NOT BECAUSE OF CURRENT INFLUENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT- CONTROLLED MEDIA, BUT TO FORM ATTITUDES WHICH WILL INFLUENCE THEIR WORK IF A FREE PRESS IS REESTABLISHED IN BURMA

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OR IF THEY RISE TO ONE OF THE FEW POSITIONS OF REAL IMPORTANCE WITHIN THE INFORMATION BUREAUCRACY. THE OTHER YOUNG PROFESSIONALS ARE IMPORTANT TO THE UNITED STATES SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY WILLH FORM A MAJOR PART OF THE BURMESE INFRASTRUCTURE NO MATTER WHAT THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN BURMA MAY BE IN THE FUTURE.

I- C. NO SHORT- TERM YOUTH IMPAC EXPECTED.

II- A. OBJECTIVES:

50 PERCENT PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING OF BROAD U. S. GOALS AND POLICIES

25 PERCENT CREATE AND MAINTAIN FAVORABLE ATTITUDES TOWARD U. S.

25 PERCENT ENCOURAGE PRAGMATIC, LON- IDEOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO NATIONAL PROBLEMS.

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BECAUSE OF THE RESTRICTED ACCESS TO YOUTH GROUPS, OUR MAJOR EFFOROG MUST BE DIRECTED THROUGH NON- PERSONAL PROGRAMMING SUCH AS USIS MAGAZINES AND PROGRAMS, OR WITH A SECONDARY APPROACH THROUGH PROFESSORS AND COACHES. WHAT WE CAN ATTEMPT TO DO WITH THESE PROGRAMS IS TO ESTABLISH A FAVORABLE ATTIUDE TOWARD THE U. S. AS A DYNAMIC AND CREATIVE SOCIETY, SOME UNDERSTANDING OF U. S. POLICIES, AND APPRECIATION THAT OUR OPEN APPROACHES TO SOCIAL PROBLEMS IN THE U. S. ARE PRAGMATIC WAYS TO DEAL WITH PROBLEMS ALSO PRESENT IN BURMA.

III. RESOURCES:

15 PERCENT CU FULL- YEAR ACADEMIC GRANTS TO AMERICAN PROFESSORS (LECTURING)

5 PERCENT CU SH
RT- TERM AMERICAN GRANTEES

60 PERCENT USIA CULTURAL AND INFORMATIONAL PROGRAMMING, VOA, PUBLICATIONS, EXHIBITS.

20 PERCENT SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS (CU SPONSORED AND LOCAL CONTACT)

A. IMPROVEMENTS: GREATER FOLLOW- UP BY MISSION OFFICERS ON CONTACTS DEVELOPED THROUGH CU OR SPORTS PROGRAMS NECESSARY.

B. PRIVATE RESOURCES: NOT APPLICABLE

C. PEACE CORPS: NOT APPLICABLE

IV. RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF " YOUTH"

A. LOW

B. VERY DIFFICULT UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES TO IDENTIFY YOUTH LEADERS OR POTENTIAL LEADERS AND EVEN MORE DIFFI-
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CULT TO PROGRAM FOR THEM. ANY ACTIVITY MUST BE VIEWED PRIMARILY AS A HOLDING ACTION FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS AND AS A BALANCE TO EFFORTS OF OTHER EMBASSIES.

C. MISSION WORKLOAD:

1- A. PERSONNEL TIME - THREE MAN MONTHS A YEAR

1- B. CONTACT WORK - 25 PERCENT
PROGRAM WORK - 75 PERCENT

1- C. STATE - 20 PERCENT
USIA - 60 PERCENT
DOD - 20 PERCENT (ACTIVE SPORTS CONTACTS)

2. PROGRAM RESOURCES:
10 PERCENT OF CU BUDGET
10 PERCENT OF USIA BUDGET

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